

Animal Health Division's *mission*

is found in the West Virginia State Code §19-9-2. This division is empowered to prevent, suppress, control and eradicate any communicable diseases of animals and poultry.

Throughout the past year, Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD) has nearly circled the globe. The three major areas presently free of this disease are North America, New Zealand and Australia. With the massive outbreak in England and portions of Europe, both the United States and West Virginia declared a high state of alert and developed a plan of preparation and response to any and all highly infectious diseases of animals and poultry. With millions of tourists leaving and entering our national borders, the opportunity for several disease-causing entities to cause great economic harm was probable.

Another great concern was the possibility of intentionally introduced acts of terror. Division staff have attended and participated in several meetings that developed a plan of action and reaction to an important development that continues to threaten public and animal health.

Worldwide concern about food safety has intensified. While the United States has the safest food supply in the world, improvements may yet be made. E. coli, Campylobacter and Salmonella are the three primary contributors to the death of thousands and the illness of tens of millions annually in the United States. West Virginia is one of 31 states contributing to the database that exemplifies the integrity of our food production.

West Virginia, through the efforts of Senator Robert C. Byrd and others, participated in the Oral Rabies Vaccination (ORV) program. The West Virginia Department of Agriculture, West Virginia Health Department, United States Department of Agriculture/Wildlife Services, West Virginia Department of Natural Resources and others joined forces to prevent the westward spread of raccoon rabies. These efforts have proven to be successful in

curbing and eliminating species-related rabies.

Transmissible spongiform encephalopathy (TSE) has been a disease of increasing importance. Bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) has claimed 180,000 cows in England alone. The associated variant, Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, has claimed the lives of 100 people. West Virginia continues to send the brains and cerebella of cattle to United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for laboratory analysis.

The program to control and eliminate scrapie for our sheep and goats received a positive push from USDA. This requires that most sheep and goats be identified with an ear tag. Proper record keeping will provide a means of tracing animals to the herds or flocks of origin. West Virginia is proud to have a Voluntary Scrapie Elimination Program.

West Virginia has also adopted a Voluntary Johne's Program and a committee has been formed. Johne's is a disease that has public health implications and needs well utilized funding from any and all sources.

Equine infectious anemia (EIA) is a rare, but serious, disease of horses. In protecting our valuable horse industry in West Virginia, we tested the serum for 13,303 equine with no positives found. This is evidence of an outstanding job on the part of the veterinarians and horse owners.

Poultry production is West Virginia's number one industry, with production valued in excess of \$200 million. The Division's laboratory provides the testing for the products to go worldwide. Industry has been very cooperative with this preventative measure.